



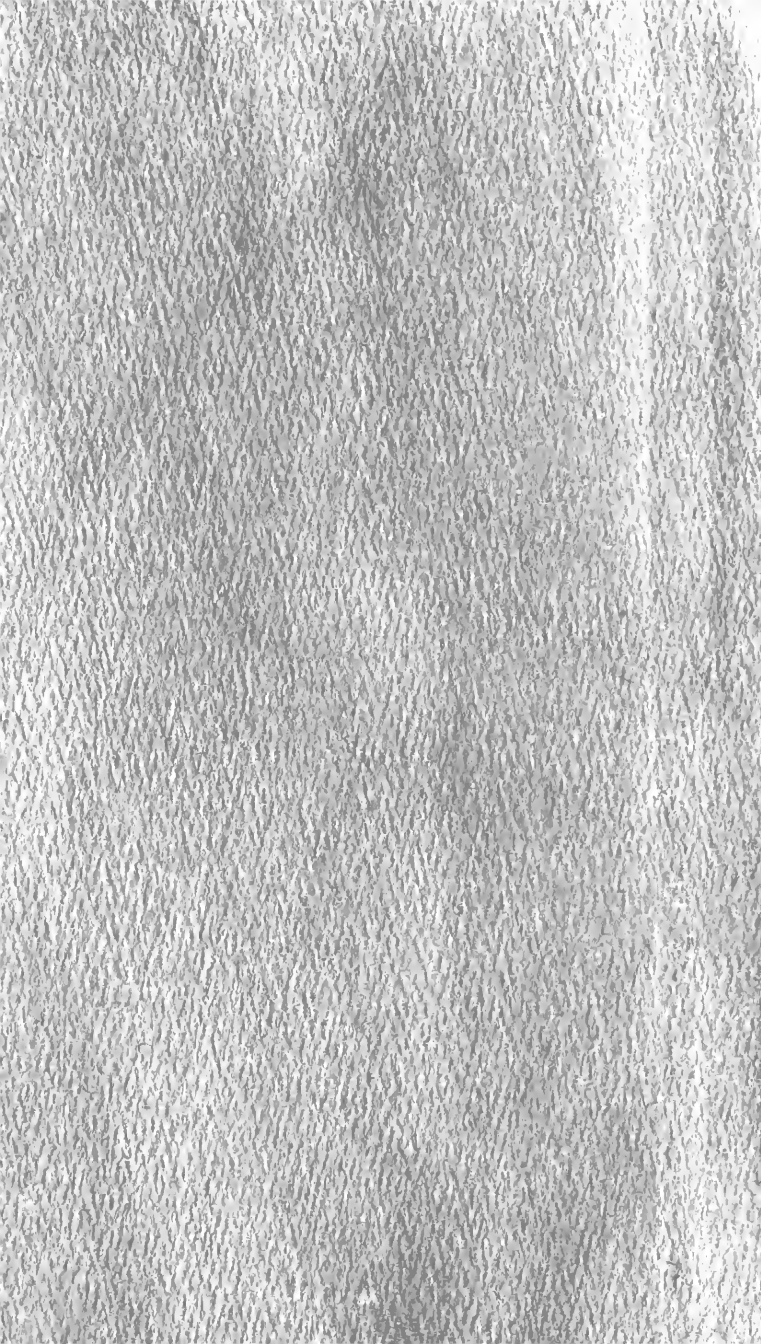
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Ruckstone, Jonn Baldwin  
Uncle John

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# UNCLE JOHN.

A PETITE COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY J. B. BUCKSTONE.

PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

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LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,  
COVENT GARDEN.

*(Agent to the Dramatic Authors' Society.)*

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1833.

PR  
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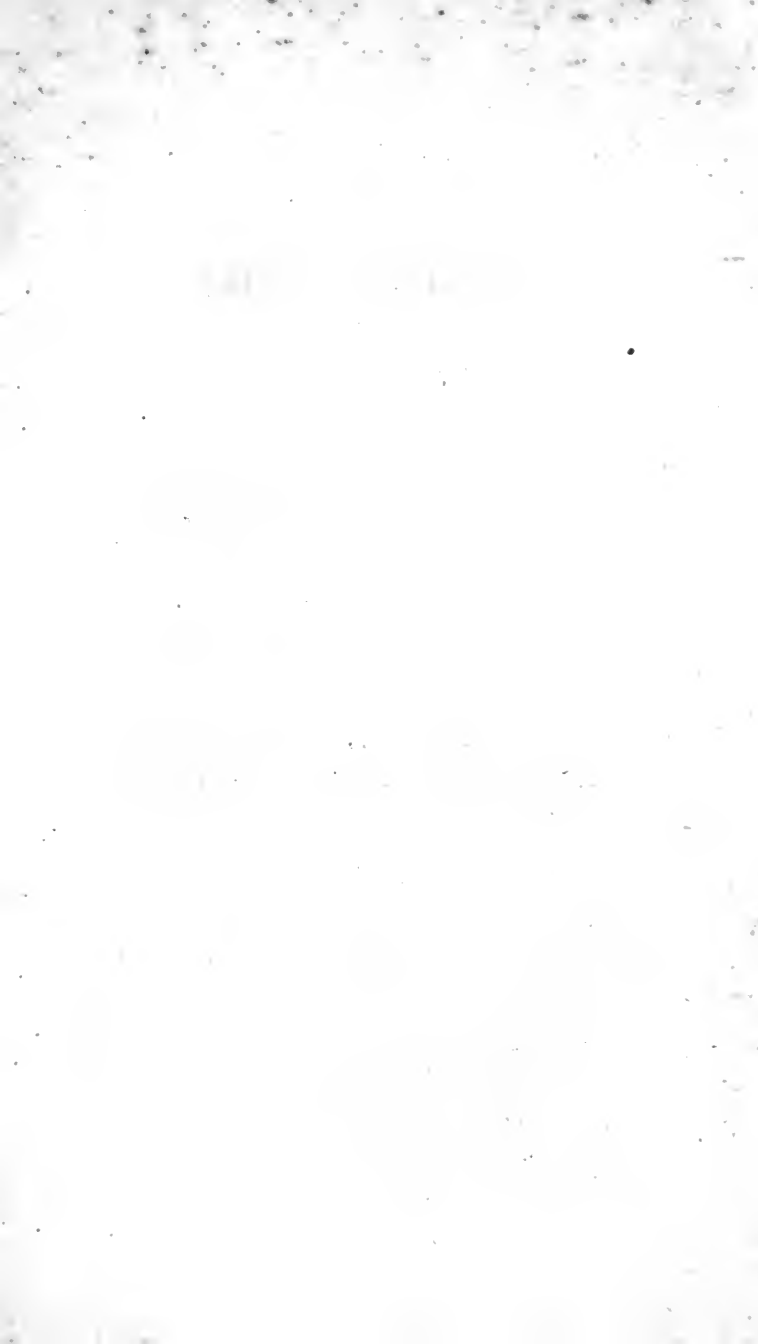
## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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<i>Uncle John</i> .....	Mr. W. FARREN.
<i>Nephew Hawk</i> .....	Mr. WEBSTER.
<i>Friend Thomas</i> .....	Mr. STRICKLAND.
<i>Edward Easel</i> .....	Mr. BRINDAL.
<i>Andrew</i> .....	Mr. J. COOPER.
<i>Niece Hawk</i> .....	Mrs. GLOVER.
<i>Eliza</i> .....	Mrs. HUMBY.
<i>Mrs. Comfort</i> .....	Mrs. W. CLIFFORD.

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*This Comedy was represented for the first time, October 15, 1833.*





# UNCLE JOHN.

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## ACT I.

SCENE.—*The interior of a well-furnished apartment. Folding doors at the back, through which is seen a garden. A door, R. H., 2nd entrance, chairs, &c. &c. ANDREW discovered looking at his memorandums.*

ANDREW. The presents for the bride have all arrived—the box of jewels, the gloves, the shawl—yes, all's right,—and now it wants but two hours of the time, when my old master will become a married man. Well, *he* knows best, but, in my humble opinion, were I to live till sixty without a wife, I shouldn't alter my condition so late in the day,—I wouldn't run the chance of being hurried out of the world eight or nine years earlier than I calculated upon, by the deadly risks of matrimony. If a man don't marry by forty, or say three-and-forty, he ought not to think of a wife at all, that's *my* opinion,—eh! what's that?—(*running to the window, L. H.*) Bless me, a coach!—visitors to the wedding I suppose. As sure as I'm Andrew, it's my master's nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Hawk—the only relations belonging to him in the world. I have been thinking of them two or three times, and wondering how it was they had never interfered in this matrimonial business!

MRS. HAWK *heard without.*

MRS. HAWK. That will do William, that will do, I know my way, come dear, follow me.

AND. Here they are.

*Enter MR. and MRS. HAWK in travelling dresses.*

MRS. H. Ah, Andrew, good morning! How's dear uncle John?

HAWK. Quite well I hope.

MRS. H. Is he up yet?

AND. Oh, yes ma'am—been up these four hours!

MRS. H. Indeed! he was not such an early riser when we were last here?

AND. Its all owing to love, ma'am.

MRS. H. Love!

AND. Yes ma'am. It alters all people in some way or other; before he thought of being married, he never used to be out of his room before eight; now he's in the garden every morning at six, digging away as if he got his living by it. All to keep up his stamina, as he calls it—*his* stamina.

HAWK. Then he's still bless'd with a notion that his bodily strength is invincible!

AND. Oh, yes, sir, and is as happy as ever! He thinks the world and every thing in it excellent and beautiful; and that he is the heartiest and strongest man in it,—and says, he don't intend to die till he's an hundred.

MRS. H. As the idea is the offspring of a mind at ease, we must not undeceive him. Ah! if he was wasting every day like *me*.

HAWK. And our uncle is really going to be married!

AND. *Bony fidy.*

MRS. H. And this is to be his wedding day?

AND. Yes ma'am.

MRS. H. Very extraordinary; he never informed us of it before yesterday. At breakfast a letter was laid upon our table, 'twas uncle John's writing, so we opened it immediately,—and what was our astonishment, when we read, that he was going to be married this morning, at eleven o'clock. "Dear, dear," said I to Hawk, "My love, how very strange that uncle John should never have mentioned the matter till this moment!"

AND. None of *us*—that is, none of the servants knew that he had really made up his mind till within these three days.

MRS. H. He didn't invite us to the wedding in his letter; but we considered the information to amount to the same thing; so we got ready as soon as possible—booked two places in the Marlborough coach—and here we are.

AND. He'll be very glad to see you, I dare say.

HAWK. Dear old soul! We owe every thing to him.

MRS. H. Every thing! When my first husband, Mr. Che-root the tobacconist, died, I was left in very comfortable circumstances.

HAWK. Don't, my love—don't allude to past troubles.

MRS. H. We *must* allude to them sometimes, my dear, that we may the more appreciate our present happiness. I married you when I had been a widow a year; you were rather gay—

HAWK. And you were fond of Brighton—

MRS. H. No, dear; it was *you*.

HAWK. My love, you took apartments at four guineas per week—

MRS. H. Well, sir, my health required it.

HAWK. I merely mentioned it, my soul—

MRS. H. In short, as my uncle knows our circumstances became embarrassed—he, dear *man*, was made acquainted with our troubles, and instantly relieved us by establishing us in business in Piccadilly.

HAWK. Where, thanks to the march of mind, and the public passion for cigars, we are again flourishing.

MRS. H. (*Sitting down, taking off her bonnet, and putting it on the table*) I shall make myself quite at home; take off your coat, dear—(*To HAWK, who takes off his great coat*)—And Andrew, will you be so kind as to tell our dear uncle that we are here, and that we have arrived to participate in his happiness, and wish him joy, and be delighted, and all that.

AND. Delighted, ma'am!

MRS. H. Of course, delighted! What? Andrew, come here. You are sorry; I think you are—

AND. At what, ma'am?

MRS. H. That your master is going to be married—must make some difference to you. You know, you servants can do what you please with a master; but a mistress is not so easily managed—eh, Andrew!

AND. Oh no, ma'am; it won't make the least difference to me. I only thought it rather odd that *you* should be so *very* delighted.

MRS. H. Why, sir?

HAWK. Andrew, no doubt, thinks, that as we are uncle John's only relations, and were he never to marry, his property might come to us, we may have some little reason not to seem so extremely delighted as we really are.

MRS. H. Lord bless me! we are very different sort of people, I assure you, Andrew. Some relations would have

been offended, or cross, or insolent ; but we—dear Hawk and I—we are too much rejoiced at the prospect of seeing the remainder of dear uncle John's days passed in domestic peace, to feel hurt ; an't we, Hawk.

HAWK. Certainly.

AND. Well, I'll go and tell master you have arrived.

MRS. H. Do, Andrew ; but don't hurry him, I beg. No doubt, on such a day as this, he is a little fidgetty and agitated—very natural—I have been twice in the same situation, and know the emotions well ; so, tell him not to put himself out of the way on our account.

AND. I will, ma'am. They are not quite so pleased at this wedding as they pretend to be, *I* can see. (*Exit.*)

MRS. H. Now, Mr. Hawk, listen to me. You must be very circumspect in your conduct to-day ; you must watch my every gesture, or our best hopes will be destroyed.

HAWK. What a state of mind I am in, to think that his property, which we have so long looked upon as our own, should be in such jeopardy ! in spite of his animal spirits and fine stamina ; according to the course of nature, he can't live very long.

MRS. H. You must not betray your thoughts ; we must humour him,—and proceed to break off the match—

HAWK. Which must be done in two hours. He shall *not* marry ; 'twill be shameful, ridiculous—

MRS. H. Silence, Hawk ; don't be so violent—(*producing a letter*) He tells us in his letter, that his intended is the only daughter of a lady that he has known for years ; that she loves him as a father, and that he is certain of being happy.

HAWK. 'Tis that gawky little girl that we once saw here ;

he has educated and wasted his money upon her, forgetting his poor relations—his ties of consanguinity—but he shall not be married; and, should we succeed in preventing the match, I promise that you shall have a new cashmere shawl.

MRS. H. Hush! I hear his voice.

(UNCLE JOHN *speaks without.*)

UNCLE J. Lay breakfast in the summer-house, Andrew.

MRS. H. (*To Hawk*) Receive him affectionately, dear; and tell him how well he looks—here he is—Ah, my dear uncle John!

HAWK. Uncle John!

UNCLE JOHN *enters in a morning gown.*

UNCLE JOHN. Ah, niece! Ah, nephew! I did not expect this visit. The last time that I invited you here, you told me your business required so much attention you couldn't leave it.

MRS. H. That was six months ago; we were excessively busy—poor Hawk was up day and night. Well, my dear uncle, I am so glad to see you—(*shaking his hand, and pressing it affectionately.*)

HAWK. Though your letter did not contain any formal invitation, yet, on such an occasion we thought we could do no less than hasten to share in your happiness.

MRS. H. So we left every thing at sixes and sevens to come to you. How well you do look, uncle!

UNCLE J. I do look well; I know I do;—early rising and temperate habits—that's the plan. I am as hearty as the generality of men are at forty. This morning, at breakfast, I turned up the whole of my Dutch lettuce-bed—thirty feet square—eh! um!—few men of my age can do that, I think.

MRS. H. Wonderful!

HAWK. Extraordinary man!

UNCLE J. Then went to breakfast—ale and a beef-steak; nothing else—no tea; no coffee—fine sparkling, invigorating home-brewed. No man, who wishes to renovate his stamina, should drink tea—pah! a weak, washy, squalid beverage! Give me your hand—(to Hawk)—There (*squeezing his fingers*)—did you ever know a man of sixty do that?

HAWK. Uncle, pray be merciful.

UNCLE J. Eh! Ha! ha! ha!—like the grip of a blacksmith's vice, wasn't it? Put your thumb and finger here—(*doubling up his arm; HAWK puts his thumb and finger on the muscle*)—Eh! There's muscle—hard as a cannon-ball—eh! for a man of sixty—you should see me run, every morning a mile-and-a-half—fine exercise—fine exercise.

MRS. H. You have twenty years before you yet.

UNCLE J. Twenty!—forty! I have just been looking over the monthly obituary for Wiltshire; I found ten deaths at eighty, seven at ninety, three at a hundred—huzza! said I, I have forty good years before me yet. If I have a son, there's no doubt of my living to educate him—see him turn out a bright fellow, and inherit my estate.

HAWK. A son—ah! (*Sighing.*)

MRS. H. You were always a sanguine man, uncle. Well, I hope it may be so from my heart. How was it you never thought of marrying before?

UNCLE J. Never could meet with a woman that I considered suited to me; all of them now-a-days seem so nervous, so chilly, so lack-a-daisical, a breath of air kills them. I like air. I throw open windows, doors—sit in draughts—get wet through—roll in the snow—never do me any harm—hard as iron.

HAWK. Your intended, you say, is—

UNCLE J. The daughter of my old friend, Mrs. Comfort ; a dear little girl, just nineteen. I nursed her when a child, directed her disposition, educated her, as you know. She has had the best masters ; she loves me, and why shouldn't I marry her, eh ! I'm a country gentleman—we grow our own mutton—why not grow our own wife ?

MRS. H. But, my dear uncle, she is nineteen you say ; don't you think that is too young an age for a girl to marry at ?—especially to one so much older than herself : a girl's affections cannot be fixed so early ; the first man that pays them attention they look upon with interest, and think they are in love ; but the real passion—the *genuine*, the *marrying* one, seldom attacks us till we are turned twenty.

UNCLE J. No lectures now—no lectures to me—I have never been used to them, and they don't agree with me. I've made up my mind.

MRS. H. Oh, my dear uncle, don't imagine for one moment that we are striving to make you uneasy—wouldn't attempt such a thing for worlds. My dear uncle, your very suspicion hurts me extremely.

HAWK. Mrs. H. was merely giving an opinion, formed upon long observation—nothing more—no allusion to you—

MRS. H. No, indeed, no.

UNCLE J. Well, well ; I believe you. William—

*Enter a SERVANT.*

Take my nephew's coat and hat. Mary shall wait upon you, niece. Excuse me a moment—merely going to dress. (*The SERVANT goes off with MRS. HAWK'S bonnet, &c., and HAWK'S coat and hat.*) Rather late for me to be seen in my morning gown ; but I have been so very busy. Make yourselves



quite at home. My bride will be here presently ; I'll introduce you to her ; but observe, no more allusions to my age. I'm worth more than an hundred of your young men yet. My stamina's sound, Sir—sound—no rheumaticks—no cough—lungs firm as a rock. (*Striking his breast.*) When I call my loudest, my voice cracks the room windows. Fine stamina, Sir—good appetite—excellent animal spirits—and with the best half of my teeth in my head, and the best half of my life to come, why shouldn't I have a wife?—Eh ! to be sure. (*Exit.*)

MRS. H. (*Sinking in a chair at the table.*) Hawk !

HAWK. (*In another chair.*) My love.

MRS. H. I never saw uncle John so violent and determined before. He seems quite fixed.

HAWK. He does, indeed. I'm afraid he will have a wife.

MRS. H. And this beautiful house and estate—I should break my heart if I thought it would be lost to me.

*Enter* FRIEND THOMAS.

THOM. Ah ! Mr. and Mrs. Hawk, how d'ye do ?

MRS. H. Ah ! Mr. Thomas !

HAWK. Some time since we last met, Mr. Thomas.

THOM. Yes ; you are quite strangers here.

MRS. H. Been so busy, Mr. Thomas.

HAWK. Must look to business, you know, Mr. Thomas.

THOM. Certainly, certainly. Seen my old friend John ?

MRS. H. I have. (*Sighing.*) Strange change about to take place in the family, Mr. Thomas.

THOM. A change, certainly, but for the best I hope.

MRS. H. Do you really think so, Mr. Thomas ?

THOM. The girl seems very fond of your uncle.

MRS. H. But, Mr. Thomas, she's so young. Had uncle

John turned his thoughts to some respectable woman, of an age more adapted to his own, don't you think, as a friend, it would have been more to his advantage?

THOM. Oh! I don't know;—the girl is a very good girl—in short, I recommended the match.

MRS. H. You, Mr. Thomas!

HAWK. (*Aside.*) Zounds! they're all alike—not a friend to be found.

THOM. I saw that she always seemed very anxious to please him, and to sing to him, and play the music to him; and he appeared so happy in her company, that I said to him, says I—“Old boy, if you will have a wife,” says I, “why don't you marry her,” says I. “So, says he, “I will”—and here's the wedding day, and there's an end of it.

MRS. H. (*Aside to HAWK.*) We shall have no assistance from *him*.

HAWK. None.

THOM. Ah! here she comes—here she is—her mother and all. I'm almost inclined to envy my old friend John, when I look at her.

*Enter ELIZA and MRS. COMFORT, dressed for the wedding.*

ELI. (*Taking Thomas's hand.*) Ah! Mr. Thomas.

THOM. Your intended's nephew and niece, my dear.

ELI. Mr. and Mrs. Hawk—I recollect them well. How d'ye do ma'am?

MRS. H. (*Kissing her.*) How d'ye do, my dear?

ELI. Mamma, Mrs. Hawk.

(MRS. COMFORT and MRS. HAWK *courtsey*, MR. HAWK *bows.*)

MRS. C. Give me your scarf 'Liza; you need not wear it in the house.

ELI. You know all, I suppose, Mrs. Hawk?

MRS. H. Yes, my dear, and I wish you every happiness.

ELI. Thank ye, Mrs. Hawk.

MRS. C. (*Arranging ELIZA'S dress.*) Do stand still 'Liza; you will put your dress quite out of order, and you can't look too nice on such an occasion.

ELI. Ha! ha!—I can't help laughing.

MRS. C. 'Liza! I'm ashamed.

ELI. Excuse me. What should you suppose I was thinking of?

MRS. H. Don't know, dear; though I am not surprized at your thinking; one's wedding day is a day for thoughts, and very serious one's too.

ELI. I'm too happy to have any serious thoughts—no—I was thinking that when I am married I shall be your aunt. Bless me how odd!—to think that I should be your aunt—never mind, I shall behave very well to you—you shall find me a very good aunt I assure you.

MRS. H. (*Aside to HAWK.*) Umph—she's patronizing us already.

THO. (*To the HAWKS.*) You approve of my friend's choice I hope.

MRS. H. How can I do otherwise? (*Aside to HAWK.*) A made up miss.

HAWK. Horrid taste uncle John must have.

ELI. Where is my dear friend?

MRS. H. Your dear friend!

ELI. I forget—I must break myself of that term now—your uncle has behaved so kind to me from my infancy, that I have always called him “my dear friend;”—when I was a girl he used to call me his little woman—when I grew older.

I was his pretty protégé—now I have grown up he calls me his intended—

MRS. C. And to-day dear, he will give you another name.

MRS. H. No, no—he'll return to the first, you will again be his little woman.

ELI. Here he is—

MRS. H. And dressed too—how well he looks.

ELI. How well he looks.

All. How well he looks!

*Enter UNCLE JOHN dressed for the wedding, followed by Andrew.*

UNCLE J. Ah my little woman (*taking ELIZA'S hand.*)

ELI. My dear friend.

UNCLE J. No, no—I'm not to be your dear friend now, I'm to be your husband—you must call me John—dear John at home, plain John in company—I hate to see married people dearing and ducking one another in public.

MRS. H. Very absurd—

UNCLE J. They always fight at home, don't they niece?

MRS. H. I should presume they do.

UNCLE J. Well, mother-in-law—you and I are old friends—eh; give me a kiss—

MRS. C. Oh for shame!

UNCLE J. Pooh—pooh—do as I like—there—(*kisses her heartily*) there's a kiss for you—eh?—that's the way—no turtle biting and mincing the matter for me—I like a good hearty sounding smack—one that you can hear a mile off. Andrew!—

AND. Sir—

UNCLE J. Get the breakfast ready in the summer-house—I've taken mine two-hours ago, but I shall join you. Thomas.

you sleepy old mole (*shaking him*) be as lively as I am—rouse up, run to the church, tell 'em we shall be there precisely at eleven—and give the ringers a guinea—we must have a hearty peal—go—fly—vanish—(*Thomas runs out.*) Andrew!—

AND. Sir—

UNCLE J. The nicknacks.

AND. They're ready, Sir.

*Enter two Servants at a sign from ANDREW, bringing on presents. ANDREW goes off at the back.*

MRS. H. What is all this?

UNCLE J. A little whim of mine—I like to see these matters managed with taste. They are presents for my little wife—bridal presents.

ELI. For me!

UNCLE J. All for you—(*takes a packet from the first servant*) here are two dozen of white kid gloves—(*gives them to ELIZA.*)

ELI. Oh, thank ye—take care of them for me mamma.

MRS. H. Two dozen—how extravagant! (*aside to HAWK.*)

HAWK. Shameful! shameful!

UNCLE J. William, the shawl—(*A servant comes forward with an elegant shawl on his arm.*) There my love—a cashmere shawl—(*giving it to ELIZA.*)

MRS. H. Do you see Hawk?—(*aside to HAWK.*)

HAWK. I do indeed.

ELI. Thank you dear—

UNCLE J. John—call me John—

ELI. I can't just yet—I must get used to it by degrees—I fancy that I'm speaking to the footman when I say John—

MRS. H. (*Examining the shawl.*) It is indeed a real cashmere—a very expensive shawl that Uncle—

UNCLE J. I suppose it is—when I make up my mind to be generous I never think of pounds, shillings, and pence—

MRS. H. Just the very one that I have wanted so long—  
(*aside to HAWK.*)

HAWK. Well, well,—be patient dear—(*aside.*)

UNCLE J. Thomas, the jewellery—

MRS. H. Jewellery!

HAWK. Oh!

*A servant comes forward with a box of jewellery, UNCLE JOHN takes the box from the servant, opens, and presents it to ELIZA.*

ELI. Beautiful! beautiful!—pearl necklace—diamond earrings! They are diamonds—I'm sure they are.

UNCLE J. Certainly. I never make presents of trumpery paste—no flour and water for me.

*ELIZA takes a necklace from the box and examines it with delight.*

MRS. H. Dear, dear, how splendid!

HAWK. (*With sadness.*) Extremely beautiful!

MRS. H. How uncle John has been wasting his money.  
(*Aside to HAWK.*)

HAWK. Ah! (*Sighing.*)

ELI. Did you ever see any thing so elegant ma'?

MRS. C. Very handsome indeed—now you must be very careful of them, and they must never be worn but at the as-size ball, or—

UNCLE J. Pooh—pooh—she shall wear them whenever she pleases; I've no notion of making presents with restrictions as to their use—she may do as she likes with them—pitch 'em out of window—tie 'em round her poodle—any thing—when I make a present I make a present.

ELI. (*Putting on the shawl.*) I shall go to church in this.

UNCLE JOHN *arranges the shawl upon ELIZA'S shoulders.*

MRS. COMFORT *assisting. The servants go off.*

MRS. H. (*Aside to her husband.*) Charles, did you ever see any thing like it? What waste of the family's money. That box of jewellery must have cost an hundred pounds or more—and that shawl—a cashmere too—the very thing I had set my heart upon. (*Bursting into tears.*) I can't bear it—I can't bear it.

UNCLE J. Hollo! hollo!—What is all this?—my niece in tears. Jemima! Jemima!—what's the matter, woman?

HAWK. My poor wife, Sir, feels a little hurt at—at—

MRS. H. (*Aside to HAWK.*) Silence, Sir. Excuse me, dear uncle, 'twas a sudden burst of affection for you—and—I could'nt control my tears—could I, Hawk?

HAWK. No.

UNCLE J. For what? for what?

MRS. H. You know how dear you are to us.

UNCLE J. Yes—well—well?

MRS. H. It suddenly occurred to me, that when you are married you will quite forget your poor niece.

UNCLE J. Poor nieces don't allow their uncles to forget them so soon. They are everlasting memorandum books. Come, come; dry your eyes—(*wiping her eyes with his handkerchief.*) Give me a kiss. There, there—let me have no more tears: Its a bad omen. A man's wedding day, is the St. Swithin's day of his life. If it rains then, what the devil must he expect afterwards? By the bye, where's my friend Easel? *He ought to be here.*

ELI. He promised to come, and I shall be so unhappy if he disappoints us.

MRS. H. Who is Mr. Easel?

UNCLE J. A young man—friend of mine.

MRS. H. A *young* man?

UNCLE J. Yes. An artist. Very clever fellow. My little woman's drawing master.

MRS. H. Indeed! (*Aside to her husband*)—Hawk, my dear this is worth attending to.

UNCLE J. He's to be father.

ELI. And give me away.

UNCLE J. Fine young fellow. Had three pictures in the academy last summer.

ELI. And sold them all.

UNCLE J. Clever young fellow—a genius.

ELI. I love him as a brother.

MRS. H. (*Aside to HAWK.*) She loves her husband as a father, and now she loves a certain young man as her brother.

HAWK. Affectionate creature—(*aside*).

*Friend THOMAS heard without.*

THOMAS. Just in time, Edward.

ELI. Here he is. Here he is.

*Enter THOMAS with EDWARD EASEL.*

EDW. Ah, my friends, a happy morning to you. My amiable pupil—(*taking ELIZA's hand*).

ELI. I was afraid you would not come.

MRS. H. (*Aside to Hawk.*) Do yo hear? She was *afraid*.

UNCLE J. My nephew and niece, Edward; the only relations I have in the world at present.

EDW. Happy to see you, madam—(*taking MRS. HAWK's hand*). Sir, your most obedient—(*bowing to HAWK*).



*Enter ANDREW at the back.*

ANDREW. Breakfast is ready, sir.

UNCLE J. Come my little woman, take my arm. Mother-in-law, carry those things into your daughter's room. You know where it is.

(MRS. COMFORT, *in going off with the box of jewels and packet of gloves, curtseys as she passes MRS. HAWK, who sneers at her.*)

UNCLE J. Come Edward, you have not breakfasted, I know. You're a sluggard. Shocking habit—plays the very deuce with your stamina. Not like me—eh.

EDW. No, indeed.

MRS. H. Uncle John is a wonderful man at his age. Don't you think so, sir—(to EDWARD).

UNCLE J. My age! Damn it, niece, you never will cease alluding to my age. I am sixty; I know it; every body knows it. I'm a mere boy. Don't talk to *me*. Do you know how old Queen Elizabeth was, when she condemned the Earl of Essex to death for slighting her?

MRS. H. No.

UNCLE J. Then I'll tell you—sixty-eight.

MRS. H. Bless me; how improper.

UNCLE J. Do you know how old Mark Antony was, when he lost all for love of his Cleopatra?

MRS. H. No.

UNCLE J. I'll tell you—seventy.

HAWK. } Astonishing!  
MRS. H. }

UNCLE J. And, if we may believe the classic parish registers, Helen of Troy was four-score when Paris stole her away.

HAWK. }  
 MRS. H. } Indeed!

UNCLE J. And the war lasted ten years after that. I'm a boy—a mere boy. Come, my little woman, now for breakfast, and then for the parson—eh! Ha! ha! Come, my friends, follow me—follow me.

UNCLE JOHN *takes ELIZA'S arm, and walks briskly out with her at the back, followed by FRIEND THOMAS and ANDREW.*

MRS. H. (*detaining EDWARD.*) My dear sir—one word. Uncle John must have a very high opinion of you, to allow so young a gentleman to be the drawing master of his very young wife.

EDW. You don't suspect that I should presume upon—

MRS. H. No, no—certainly not; but opportunities might occur. In short, *I* should look upon you as rather a dangerous rival of my Uncle's.

EDW. (*Astonished.*) Madam!

FRIEND THOMAS *heard without.*

THO. Edward; we are waiting—come, come.

HAWK. I should like to have a little talk with you presently, if you can find time.

EDW. Certainly.

HAWK. In confidence.

EDW. Yes, yes.

THOMAS, *without.*

THO. Edward! (*without.*)

EDW. Coming, coming. EDWARD *goes out at the back.*

MRS. H. (*Taking her husband's arm, and looking at him archly.*) My love.

HAWK. My duck.

MRS. H. This young man is a perfect God-send. I think we can now set them all together by the ears with ease. Don't you think so, dear?

HAWK. Let me see. A young artist.

MRS. H. The bride his pupil. Don't you see? A little manœuvering, and the wedding may yet receive its death-blow.

HAWK. It may. My uncle's property is not yet lost to us.

MRS. H. No, dear; and I may yet have my cashmere shawl.

HAWK. (*With Glee.*) Come, my darling, to breakfast,

MRS. H. Come, my love.

UNCLE JOHN, *without.*

UNCLE J. Nephew, niece, where are you?

MRS. H. }  
HAWK. } Coming, dear uncle John.

*They go off at the back, in a very affectionate manner,*

HAWK *with his arm round her waist and in high spirits.*

END OF ACT I.

## ACT II.

SCENE.—*As before.*

*Enter* MRS. HAWK *and* ELIZA.

ELIZA. Is it really true Mrs. Hawk?

MRS. HAWK. It is indeed, dear Miss Comfort, and I am happy that I have been able to seize an opportunity of informing you: uncle John is now occupied in showing the party his gymnastics, so we can talk a little in quiet.

ELI. You say that Mr. Edward, my drawing master, is in love with me?

MRS. H. Breaking his heart about you, dear. Didn't you observe how very thoughtful he was during breakfast?

ELI. I certainly *did*: but as he's painting some great picture, he may be thinking of that.

MRS. H. No, my love! *You* are the object of his thoughts; I suspected it the moment he arrived; I could see in the first glance that he cast upon you, a rooted melancholy was in his heart. I have now an opportunity of learning the cause, and I find it to be a hopeless and despairing passion for *you*, Miss Comfort.

ELI. Bless me, how strange! Well, I declare! Good gracious! How many odd things I seem to recollect all at once. When he has been giving me my drawing lessons, I have frequently heard him sigh, and have caught him looking at me very strangely.

MRS. H. All affection.

ELI. When I have asked him for the vermilion, he has given me the Indian ink.

MRS. H. All passion.

ELI. And he has frequently praised my bits of distance, when I've known them to be worse than the perspective on a china plate.

MRS. H. All love.

ELI. Poor fellow! If I marry uncle John, do you think he'll break his heart?

MRS. H. The consequences cannot be foreseen.

ELI. You don't mean to say, that he may do something dreadful?

MRS. H. An ardent and romantic mind, like Edward's, my dear, is hard to be controlled by reason.

ELI. How strange, he has never breathed a word of his passion to *me*.

MRS. H. True love is always diffident, dear.

ELI. I feel so uncomfortable—I can't bear the thought of seeing any one miserable; especially Edward, for whom I always had such a very—very—great friendship.

MRS. H. (*Aside.*) She begins to love him already.

ELI. I'm very unhappy.

*Enter HAWK and EDWARD.*

HAWK. (*Whispering.*) 'Tis a fact.

EDWARD. Indeed!

HAWK. I assure you.

EDW. Well, well; say no more.

HAWK. Ha! she's here—hush!

(EDWARD *stops*. ELIZA, *who has been standing in an attitude of thought, suddenly looks up, and catches his glance.*)

ELI. Oh! Is that you, sir? I—I.—Some one calls me. Coming, mother—*(runs off in confusion.)*

*(MR. and MRS. HAWK exchange looks of congratulation)*

HAWK. *(To EDWARD.)* Did you observe?

EDW. I did, indeed.

HAWK. I hope you are now convinced.

EDW. I certainly begin to think there is some truth in your hints.

HAWK. Truth! Bless you, my wife is in her confidence, and of course there are *certain* moments, Mr. Easel, when a wife cannot keep a secret from her husband.

EDW. How very unfortunate!

MRS. H. What are you two whispering about? How excessively rude,

HAWK. I've been mentioning to Mr. Easel—

MRS. H. What, dear?

HAWK. Eliza's little predilection for him.

MRS. H. Have you dared to betray my confidence, sir?

HAWK. Don't be angry with me, my dear.

MRS. H. I bound you to secrecy, Mr. Hawk.

HAWK. My feelings, my dear, got the better of my honour, and I thought it best to mention the circumstance to Mr. Easel before every hope was lost.

MRS. H. Extremely wrong of you, Mr. Hawk, I shall be cautious how I confide in you for the future.

EDW. Nay, madam, your husband had the best intentions.

MRS. H. No doubt, no doubt. Well, as you now know the secret, there can be no necessity for any mystery between us. *Very, very* unfortunate thing, my dear sir! You can't think how uncomfortable it has made me.

HAWK. Don't, dear, don't—avoid comment—'twill but make matters worse.

MRS. H. How providential the passion is not mutual!

HAWK. (*Looking at Edward.*) Very providential.

MRS. H. Tho', no doubt, you have always had a very great friendship for Eliza.

EDW. To confess the truth, I have madam, and respect for your uncle has alone prevented my encouraging thoughts—but, madam, I implore you not to allude to this subject again, matters have gone too far to permit of any hope. Eliza will be married to-day, and *must* forget me.

HAWK. Might I advise?

EDW. I'll not listen to another word, sir, let what is passed between us be forgotten. I owe much to your uncle, and will not be ungrateful. Eliza, too, must conquer her feelings,—she must reflect how kind he has been to her! and I conjure, I implore, nay, sir, I command you not to recur to this subject again! If you *do*, sir, I shall consider it an officious insult, and resent it accordingly. (*rushes off.*)

MRS. H. Charles, dear!

HAWK. Jemima, love!

MRS. H. I shall have my cashmere shawl.

HAWK. I think so love! (*embracing her.*)

*Enter friend THOMAS.*

THO. Hey day! What's the meaning of all this?

HAWK. Of what, friend Thomas?

THO. I just now met the bride in the garden, and found her in tears.

MRS. H. (*Aside to Hawk.*) D'ye hear? love's in tears!

HAWK. In tears, Mr. Thomas!

THO. Then, as I was coming in here, Mr. Easel rushed

out, and almost knock'd me down,—he begg'd my pardon, and said he was distracted.

MRS. H. (*Aside to Hawk.*) D'ye hear dear? distracted!

HAWK. Distracted; Mr. Thomas!

THO. Then, as I enter the room, a little scene of conjugal tenderness is interrupted by me.

MRS. H. Oh! Mr. Thomas. Poor Hawk and I—we are a pair in a thousand,—there are few such truly happy couples to be found. I only hope the new man and wife may be as comfortable!

THO. “You only hope,” what do you mean?—you speak as if you had a doubt.

MRS. H. Sixty and nineteen, Mr. Thomas, think of that!

THO. Take nineteen from sixty, there remains forty-one.

HAWK. A heavy balance against poor sixty!

MRS. H. Now, Mr. Easel is twenty-five.

HAWK. Ah! (*sighing and shaking his head.*)

MRS. H. Ah! (*imitating him.*)

(*Mrs. H. whispers Hawk—pointing to Thomas.*)

HAWK. (*To Thomas.*) As you are an old friend of uncle John's, we think it but right to tell you that his marriage to-day will be the cause of misery—

THO. Misery!

HAWK. To Eliza and Mr. Easel.

THO. Bless me!

HAWK. We have discovered, in a most miraculous manner, that they are irrevocably attached to each other.

MRS. H. Very shocking, eh, Mr. Thomas?

THO. Shocking! Its dreadful!—this, then, accounts for *her* tears and *his* distraction; I'm petrified—friend John must know of this.



MRS. H. No, no!

HAWK. }

MRS. H. } No, not for worlds!

THO. He *shall*, he *must*—Zounds! do you think I can allow my old friend, that I honour and respect as a man to run the risk of becoming a monster? No, no! I have been married myself, and my sympathies will not permit it.

MRS. H. Well! well! you know his temper best. If you *will* tell him I should advise you to break the news very gently, for after all his anxiety, care, and expense, it will be a terrible blow—

UNCLE J. (*Calls without.*) Andrew!

MRS. H. He's coming (*looking out.*)

THO. I'll open his eyes though he says I can't my own.

MRS. H. Be cautious Thomas, be cautious how you break the matter, he's here.

*Enter* UNCLE JOHN. (*His coat on his arm.*)

UNCLE J. Where are all the people? Where are they all?

MRS. H. Shall come to you again Uncle in a moment. (*Takes HAWK'S arm and hurries off.*)

UNCLE J. Well, if this is the fun of a wedding morning, I must say it don't meet my expectation in any shape. Where have they all got to? Where are all the people?

THO. I don't know—

UNCLE J. There were Eliza, Edward, and my nephew and niece, and all of you in the garden just now—laughing, and happy, and admiring me—to amuse you I thought I'd take off my coat and run up the hill (my training hill as I call it)—off I started—up I went—never once stopped for breath—

wind excellent, sir—when I came back not a soul was to be seen—

THO. Ah! (*sighing and shaking his head.*)

UNCLE J. Eh! what does that mean? Any thing wrong?

THO. No! no! Ah!

UNCLE J. No, no, and Ah!—Why you drowsy old mandarin—get to bed again, you've risen too early—your heavy eyes are not open yet—here am I ten years older than you, lively as a lark—zounds man, if you stand blinking at me in that manner I'll jump over you and astonish you.

THO. Oh this world! this world!

UNCLE J. Well, what's the matter with the world? (*Putting on his coat.*)

THO. I'm disgusted with it.

UNCLE J. *You*, you moping old mole what d'ye mean? Abuse the world! Have *you* joined in that wretched cant? It's a splendid world sir, a fine world: beautiful atmosphere, lovely skies, noble clouds, hills, rivers, dales, woods, meadows, sea—all beautiful, magnificent; what's the matter with the world? Don't talk to me, it's a fine world! a splendid world! there's a few damned people in it—that's all sir, but the world it's self sir; Ha! ha! a charming world!

THO. Well! well its lucky it has been discovered in time—

UNCLE J. Discovered! who discovered it?

THO. I allude to another matter at this moment.

UNCLE J. (*Seizing him by the collar with both hands.*) What are you trying to be delivered of? Why is this groaning and blinking? Speak sir, or I'll pitch you on my back and run a mile with you. (*Shaking him.*)

THO. Come, come, don't pull me about in that way—I don't like it.

UNCLE J. What's the matter with you?

THO. I shan't tell you—

UNCLE J. What? I'll give your ear such a fillip with my thumb and finger it shall fly off into the next county.

THO. No, don't. Your bride Eliza—

UNCLE J. Well!

THO. Is making a fool of *you*.

UNCLE J. Eh!!

THO. And a wretch of *herself*.

UNCLE J. What?

THO. She has consented to marry *you*, but she don't care a straw for you; her heart is another's.

UNCLE J. (*Shaking him.*) What do you mean?

THO. What I say!

UNCLE J. Thomas, Thomas, you've been drinking my health!

THO. Not since last night.

UNCLE J. You've been tumbling head over heels and have hurt your head.

THO. I tell you I know what I'm saying; your bride is in love with the drawing master!

UNCLE J. Thomas, I know you're a man that would not hurt my feelings for the world. Are you serious?

THO. I am.

UNCLE J. You are speaking the truth?

THO. I am.

UNCLE J. How did you discover this?

THO. In a most miraculous manner.

UNCLE J. Zounds!! Am I awake?—I must have this

matter explain'd.—Where are they?—Come with me Thomas—(*seizing his arm violently.*)—Come with me.—If this is true, there will be dreadful doings; I shall go stark mad in the first place,—and if it's a lie I shall murder you for telling it.—Come Thomas—(*dragging him about.*)

THO. Stop! I see them coming.

UNCLE J. Who?

THO. Eliza and the young man.

UNCLE J. (*Looking out*) He's following her, sure enough.

THO. (*Urging him to the door*) This way—this way—I'll watch them for you.

UNCLE J. No! no! I'll have no listening—no watching.

THO. You had better be convinced. Come in, I say; come.

UNCLE J. If you *will* go in, go in; don't stand mumbling and poking me about in that manner; go in—(*pushes THOMAS violently off, banging door after him.*)

*Enter ELIZA.*

ELIZA. What a time mamma stops in my room. I wish she'd come to me. *My room!* For the first time in my life I feel uncomfortable on thinking a room in this house will be mine. Bless me! here's Edward following me. Where are all the party? he's here—I wish I could run away—(*sits in a chair.*)

*Enter EDWARD.*

EDW. How wretched I am! Every body seems to be avoiding me. Ah, miss! are you here?

ELI. Yes, sir.

EDW. Alone, I see.

ELI. Yes, sir.

EDW. Where's—my friend?

ELI. I don't know; I have not seen him since he took off his coat to run up the hill.

EDW. It's very strange he's not here.

ELI. Every thing seems very strange, I think.

EDW. (*Taking a chair*) Heigho!

ELI. Poor fellow! how he's sighing—Heigho!

EDW. Dear girl!—How she heighos! She's breaking her heart.

ELI. I wish I had known how he loved me a month ago.

EDW. Had she given me the slightest token of affection—the least encouragement—we might have been happy.

ELI. I had better speak to him, poor fellow! Mr.—Mr. Easel.

EDW. Madam!

ELI. Did you ever read Robinson Crusoe?

EDW. Yes, Madam. Why?

ELI. I don't know why—except that—every thing seems so lonely here all at once. That book put me in mind of it.

EDW. (*Drawing his chair nearer to her.*) Eliza—that is—Miss, you—you seem unhappy.

ELI. Oh! dear no. Heigho.

EDW. How she strives to conquer her feelings. I can't endure it. I must quit this house immediately, Eliza! (*violently*).

ELI. How you frighten'd me.

EDW. Adieu! Farewell—(*taking her hand*).

ELI. Where are you going?

EDW. Far away. To Italy—to—any where—to secure your happiness.

ELI. Won't you stay to be my father?

EDW. I could not support the trial.

ELI. (*Aside.*) He *does* love me indeed. Oh! I feel greatly interested in him.

EDW. No one is near, and I shall not have another opportunity of bidding you farewell.

ELI. If *you* will go, I can only say I shall always think of you with regret.

(UNCLE JOHN and THOMAS are seen peeping from the door.)

EDW. I shall devote myself entirely to my art; and should you ever hear my name mentioned with honour, you will, I know, feel some little pride in saying that I was once your master.

ELI. We must strive to forget each other: it will be best, indeed it will.

EDW. Farewell. I cannot stay to witness your marriage. Tell my friend that I have been called away on most urgent business, tell him—(UNCLE JOHN and THOMAS close the door; EDWARD looks round). No one is near: one kiss, Eliza—the first and the last.

ELI. No! no, be prudent.

EDW. But one. (*He takes her hand and kisses it.*)

UNCLE JOHN and THOMAS come quietly from their hiding place. UNCLE JOHN behind ELIZA, THOMAS behind

EDWARD. EDWARD kisses ELIZA'S lips.

UNCLE J. A-hem!

ELIZA looks up, screams, and rushes off. EDWARD, in confusion, runs out. UNCLE JOHN, with a look of consternation, falls into one chair, THOMAS into the other.

UNCLE J. Thomas!

THO. John!

UNCLE J. You're right. There is something the matter with the world—some horrible convulsion of nature has dis-

organized it. The sun's gone out, it has; or the chaste moon has eloped with some roué of a comet.

THO. I told the truth, you see.

UNCLE J. Don't go in a passion, Thomas: I know you can scarcely contain your rage; but be cool, be cool, as I am—(*violently*).

THO. I'm horrified.

UNCLE J. Why are you in such a fury?

THO. I'm not in a fury.

UNCLE J. You are; you're choaking with rage. Why don't you look upon the business with the eye of a philosopher—of a philosopher—(*banging his chair about*). Look at me; look at my face; I'm a picture of firmness—a picture, sir. I ought to sit for my portrait now—now, this moment. Portrait of a gentleman of sixty, controlling his temper.

*Enter MRS. COMFORT.*

MRS. C. My dear son-in-law, what's the matter with 'Liza?—the poor girl has just been with me in a dreadful state of agitation, and crying her eyes out. What's the matter?

UNCLE J. Did'nt she tell you?

MRS. C. I could get nothing from her but sobs.

UNCLE J. Mrs. Comfort, if I were not a philosopher—a man of sound sense—instead of my being quietly seated in this chair, with my hands in my breeches pockets, and perfectly composed, you would see me dancing about like a demon, knocking every body down that came in my way, cutting *your* throat, and blowing out *my* brains.

MRS. C. Sir!!

UNCLE J. In one word, I won't be married—that is, not to-day. I shall postpone it for a year or two. You may stare.

I've plenty of time before me. Though I've no objection to be a useful member of society, I've a decided aversion to becoming one of its ornaments! You're a widow, and must understand me. Come, Thomas, you and I will take a walk.

(*He seizes THOMAS'S arm violently, and rushes out with him.*)

MRS. C. What can all this mean—the match broken off! What *can* be the matter? I strongly suspect *that* nephew and niece are at the bottom of all this; if I thought so, I'd play the very deuce with them.

*Enter* MRS. HAWK.

MRS. H. Ah! Mrs. Comfort, are you here? What's the matter with uncle John? he and his friend passed me just now in a most singular manner.

MRS. C. You are perfectly acquainted with the cause of uncle John's manner I have no doubt.

MRS. H. *I*, dear Mrs. Comfort?

MRS. C. Yes, Madam *you*; and if this match *is* broken off—

MRS. H. (*Affecting astonishment.*) The match broken off, did you say?

MRS. C. And my daughter's prospects ruined, I shall consider it entirely owing to you.

MRS. H. (*Aside.*) We have succeeded—there will be no wedding, and I shall have my cashmere shawl. My dear Mrs. Comfort, in what way can I have interfered?

MRS. C. People can cause a great deal of dissension without openly interfering.

MRS. H. What do you mean, dear Madam?

MRS. C. Hints and whispers, and looks, are sometimes more mischievous than downright assertions.



MRS. H. Do you imagine, Madam, that I should condescend to hint, and whisper, and look?

MRS. C. A designing woman will condescend to any thing that may forward her views.

MRS. H. Then, in your opinion, I am a designing woman?

MRS. C. To be candid with you, that *is* my opinion.

MRS. H. Then, to be equally candid with *you*, Madam, allow me to say, that I blush for you.

MRS. C. Blush for *me*, Madam!

MRS. H. Yes, Madam! to see a woman of your years consenting to such an unequal match as the marriage of my dear uncle John with your child of a daughter.

MRS. C. *My* years, Madam! what do you mean by my years? You are not aware I presume, that I was but seventeen, when I married poor Mr. Comfort.

MRS. H. I can easily imagine you were quite forward enough.

MRS. C. You insolent creature!—

MRS. H. Don't lose your temper.

MRS. C. Oh! dear no;—I shall not lose my temper you may depend upon it—you designing—you mischief-making woman, you—you're fifty, you know you are.

MRS. H. How dare you make that assertion, I fifty! if I am madam, you are ten years older.

MRS. C. Me! I have friends that can prove—

MRS. H. Any thing no doubt—

MRS. C. I'll leave the house instantly, I'll not submit to be insulted in this manner—Eliza—(*calling*) my dear come to your mother, we'll go home Eliza—we'll go home.

*Exit Mrs C.*

(*A crash heard. Enter UNCLE JOHN in a great fury, he*

*overturns tables, &c.—every thing but one chair, into which he flings himself.)*

UNCLE J. There—there—there—there, now I've vented my rage, I shall be more composed—I feel better now—I've torn all the apple trees up by the roots, pitched the wheel-barrow into the road, thrown the garden roller through my neighbour's skylight and now I'm happy.

MRS. H. Dear uncle John,

UNCLE J. Don't bother me ; leave me to myself.

*Enter Andrew.*

ANDREW. Oh sir !

UNCLE J. What's the matter now ?

AND. Mr. Easel and your nephew Hawk have quarrell'd.

UNCLE J. Of course, every body *will* quarrel to-day, should'nt wonder if there wont be murder before night.

AND. Not at all unlikely sir, for they have gone out to fight.

MRS. H. To fight !

AND. In the shooting ground, close by.

MRS. H. Oh ! my poor Charles, where is the spot sir ? where is it ? shew it me, he will be killed.

UNCLE J. Yes, he'll be kill'd, its highly necessary that he should, to complete the horrors of my wedding day.

AND. Mr. Thomas has gone for the constables.

MRS. H. Uncle John, why don't you run and prevent bloodshed ? How can you sit here, and know your nephew's life to be in danger ?

AND. *(At the back)* There they are madam, there they are.

MRS. H. *(Running off)* Where ?

AND. Measuring the ground.

MRS. H. (*Without*) Help! Murder! Help!

*Two pistols heard in the distance, MRS. HAWK screams without, UNCLE JOHN capers about.*

UNCLE J. Its done, somebody's kill'd; I'm glad of it, now there's a climax to the events of this day; scream again Mrs. Hawk, I like it.

AND. Sir! master!

UNCLE J. Well,

AND. I strongly suspect that your nephew and niece are two serpents.

UNCLE J. (*Seizing him.*) None of your zoological hints to me sir—speak out if you've any thing to say—don't think to shock me, I'm proof against any thing now, fire!—murder—any-thing—I'm iron—

AND. I heard them say more than once this morning that come what might, your marriage should not take place.

UNCLE J. Ah! you heard that?

AND. I did sir.

UNCLE J. A thought strikes me,—a suspicion flashes across me—but then the scene I witness'd between Eliza and Mr. Easel, I'm bewilder'd (*falls into a chair.*)

THOMAS. (*Without.*) Come along, come along, It's all over.

(*Enter THOMAS, with two discharged pistols, followed by MR. and MRS. HAWK. HAWK pale and leaning on his wife, EDWARD enters.*)

THO. There's no harm done, I've arranged the dispute, and discharged their pistols in the air.

UNCLE J. What did you do that for? I wanted somebody to be kill'd, you know I did: this is the first day I ever had one unhappy moment, and somebody ought to be kill'd.

*Enter MRS. COMFORT, and ELIZA, dressed as in the First Act.*

ELIZA. Come Ma' we'll go home—

UNCLE J. You shan't go home,—stay where you are. Andrew, close the doors, and let no one go out or come in. (*Andrew closes the centre doors after him.*) Now I must have all this confusion investigated; you Hawk and Easel have had words.

MRS. H. (*Aside to HAWK.*) Speak out love boldly, don't be afraid.

HAWK. Mr. Easel insulted me uncle, and as I was burning to resent your wrongs—

UNCLE J. What right had you with my wrongs? zounds sir, d'ye think I can't resent my own? look here (*slapping his arm*) this is *my* weapon, no fire arms, no pistolling for me, a good old English fist sir, which shall knock you down sir, if you dare to interrupt me at this moment.

EDWARD. I cautioned your nephew against recurring to a subject that I am afraid has caused some dissension, he slighted my caution. I was distracted, enraged, I challenged him and we met,—

MRS. C. Allow me to say one word, (*To UNCLE JOHN.*) You have behaved very kind to my daughter from a child sir, for which as her mother, I thank you from my heart; you intended to marry her, but as I perceive the match is opposed by your relations, I think it really necessary it should be broken off. (*sobbing.*) My child's prospects are destroyed, but all is for the best. Come 'Liza.

ELI. I'm quite ready ma'. (*Sobbing.*) I did not think I should have been so unhappy on *this* day. Good bye, my dear friend. (*Taking the hand of UNCLE JOHN.*) I am very

grateful for all that you have done, and shall ever remember your kindness with thankfulness.

UNCLE J. (*Pressing her hand to his lips, and sobbing.*) Thomas! you soft-hearted fool, what are you doing? Why do you stand blubbering there like a great boy?

THOM. I'm not shedding a tear.

UNCLE J. You *are*; you are breaking your heart. Why don't you look at me—(*sobbing.*)—and be iron as I am. (*Wiping his eyes with handkerchief.*)

MRS. H. My dear uncle John, I hope you don't suspect that I have at all interfered to mar your happiness; if I thought so, I should be wretched, I should never know any peace again. (*Sobbing.*)

UNCLE J. Zounds! we're all snivelling; I must put an end to it. I've been a happy man all my life—perfectly happy, and why should I begin to be miserable now? I like to see every body happy, if I can make them so. (*Roaring at THOMAS.*) Be happy, you old drone.

THOM. Well, I am, I am.

UNCLE J. Sir,—(*to EASEL.*)—you are aware that I witnessed a circumstance which has been the chief cause of this confusion?

EDW. I am, Sir; but I assure you I had no intention of wronging you. Your nephew and niece, certainly, raised emotions in my heart that I strove to subdue, and my wish was to leave this place immediately, and for ever.

UNCLE J. Umph! You have a liking for that girl—you have, Sir;—let me have no lying—no evasion: and you, Miss, have no disinclination towards this young man; your gratitude would not have allowed you to refuse *me*; but you secretly wished I could have been forty years younger;

that was impossible, as far as regards myself; but you shall still have your wish. There—(*joining ELIZA and EDWARD'S hands.*)—take your drawing-master, it is my *desire*, my *command*; bless you both, and be happy!

Mrs. H. Oh, my dear uncle John! I thought you were a man of more sense than to part with your liberty after so long an enjoyment of it. How nobly he has acted, and of self and feeling, what a tremendous sacrifice, as the linen drapers say. Dear uncle John!

HAWK. Quite a domestic patriot—quite a Cato.

Mrs. H. (*Aside.*) Hawk, my dear, the shawl is mine?

HAWK. (*Putting his arm round her waist.*) Yes, love.

UNCLE J. And now, as I *will* have a wife, I shall marry *you*, my Comfort.

Mrs. H. *Uncle!*

HAWK. Sir!

THOM. John!

ELI. My dear friend!

Mrs. H. Uncle John!

UNCLE J. Ah! *you* may all start and stare; but this is my fixed determination. Look at me, Mrs. Comfort; you can't refuse me—fine stamina, Madam; there's a leg—Eh! will you have me? say the word—a delicate yes, or a plain no.

Mrs. C. You have really taken me so completely by surprise, that—well as you insist, I shall not object—(*giving her hand to him*).

Mrs. H. (*Crying.*) This is shameful; this is scandalous: I could not have thought it of you, uncle.

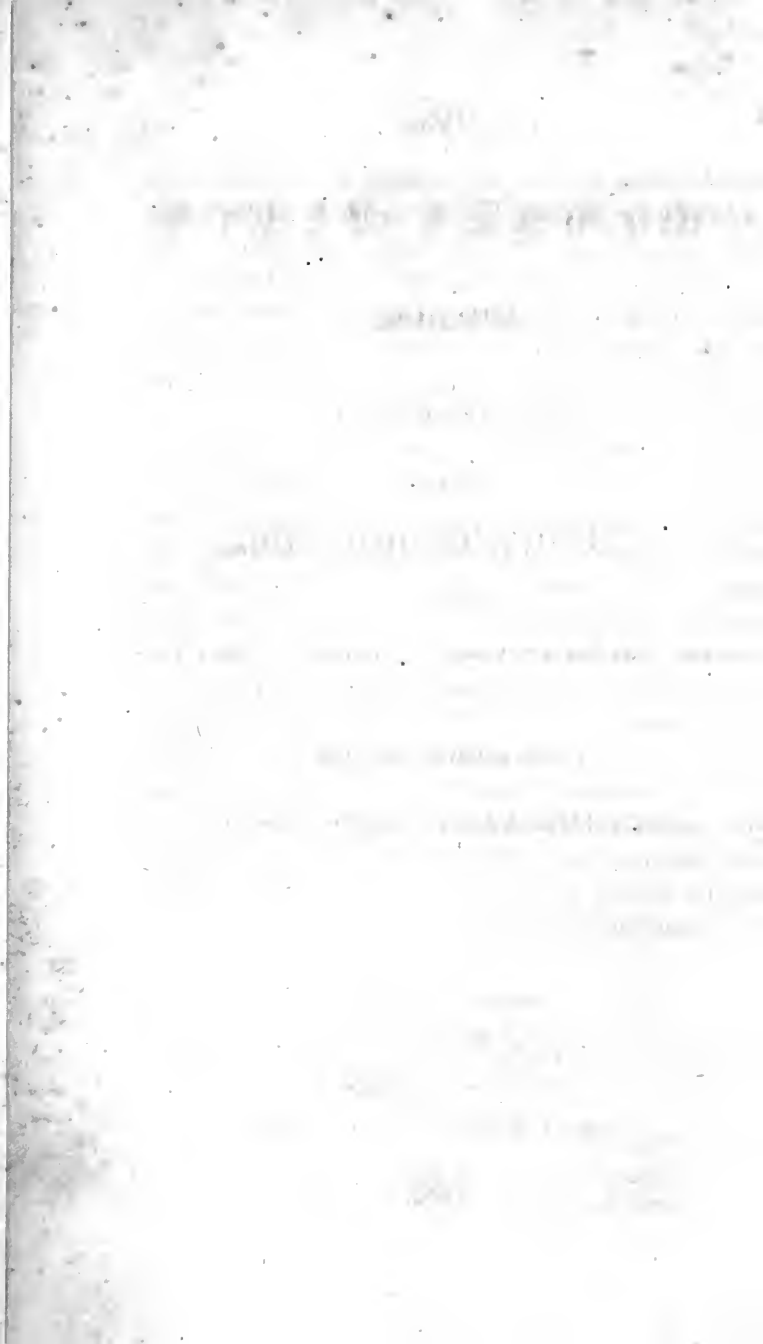
HAWK. My dear, you will not have your cashmere shawl.

Mrs. H. Uncle John, I shall no longer conceal my senti-

ments towards you ; you are welcome to your wife, or rather your nurse. You will soon require the advice and assistance of your now despised nephew and niece ; but we have done with you for ever—from this time forward, you forfeit all claim on our esteem. Hawk, get your coat and hat immediately. We will return to London, and leave these objects to their fate : go, sir, do as I order you ! (*She thrusts HAWK off violently, and follows him.*)

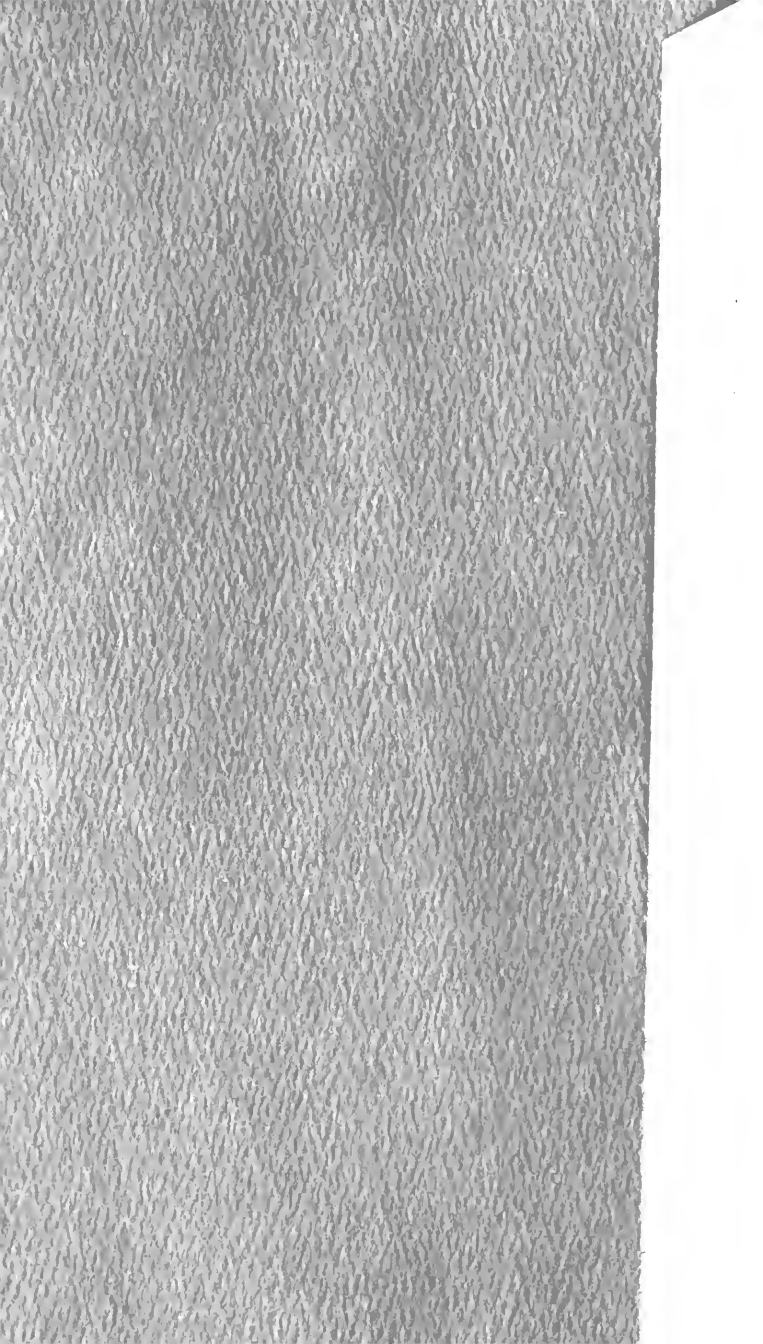
UNCLE J. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Now we are all comfortable again, and—(*looking at his watch*)—if we make haste, we shall yet be in time for the parson. Eh, Thomas, hav'nt I acted like a hero ? To be sure, I like to see every body happy. It is a beautiful world, say what you will ; and there are many happy days to be met with in this life worth living for, if we but know how to enjoy them. Eh ! Thomas ? Of course there are *some* evil-minded people ever ready to mar the joy of others, like my nephew and niece ; but if they are not to be found in these merry parties before us—(*to the audience*)—what have we to fear ? Nothing. Then, indeed, will UNCLE JOHN'S happiness, and his love of every thing and every body, be complete ; and he may yet enjoy his splendid world, excellent muscle, and fine stamina, for his remaining forty years.

THE END.









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Buckstone, John Baldwin  
Uncle John

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